



One model fits all? On the moderating role of emotional engagement and confusion in the elicitation of preferences for climate change adaptation policies

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Abstract:

Environmental economic and psychological studies often implicitly assume homogeneity of respondents' decision strategies in questionnaire-based surveys. However, social psychology and behavioural research suggest that there is a wide variety of approaches that individuals use to make such choices. We explore this heterogeneity against the backdrop of so-called dual process models', analysing participants' responses in a survey of public beliefs about and preferences for climate change adaptation policies. We find that the postulate of two different types of decision-making, the systematic-analytical and the heuristic-holistic, does indeed help us to understand patterns in respondent behaviour that are, in turn, underpinned by respondents' motivation and ability to process information. Participants who were motivated and able to process the information provided were more likely to express preferences in line with their beliefs about adaptation policies, whereas those less motivated and more confused were more likely to use generalised rules-of-thumb that were not specific to the policy issue at hand. Depending on the theoretical framework of a study, such heterogeneity in response consistency and use of generic rules-of-thumb might have implications for the usefulness of survey outcomes. We discuss the implications of our findings, and draw conclusions for survey-based environmental research. (C) 2011 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

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Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Precipitation

Extreme Weather Event: Drought, Flooding

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Europe

European Region/Country: European Country

Other European Country : Scotland

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: ☒

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article, Research Article

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified